



Brownfields National Partnership and Showcase Communities

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

"Revitalizing brownfields will help the citizens of America's cities rebuild their own communities on a new foundation of hope."

—Vice President Al Gore, announcing the Brownfields National Partnership

The Brownfields Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Brownfields Initiative strategies include funding pilot programs and other research efforts, clarifying liability issues, entering into partnerships, conducting outreach activities, developing job training programs, and addressing environmental justice concerns.

BACKGROUND

In 1996, the Brownfields National Partnership was launched—a landmark effort to improve communities by building partnerships between public and private organizations, to link environmental protection with economic development and community revitalization. This partnership seeks to protect public health and the environment, clean up contaminated properties, build economic viability, and create job opportunities.

The Brownfields National Partnership strengthens the Brownfields Initiative by coordinating federal agency efforts and resources to address the brownfields-related aspects of issues such as unemployment, substandard housing, outdated or faulty public infrastructure, crime, and poorly skilled local workforces. It provides a forum for federal agencies

to exchange information on brownfields-related activities and to develop a coordinated national agenda for addressing brownfields. It represents a wide range of brownfields stakeholders, with a collaboration of diverse backgrounds, expertise, and experience from each agency.

In 1997, the Federal partners, along with other organizations, developed the Brownfields National Partnership Action Agenda. This strategy more effectively links environmental protection with economic development and community revitalization programs by gathering specific commitments to brownfields efforts. The Action Agenda included more than 100 commitments from more than 25 organizations, including federal agencies and other partners.

The partnership is dynamic and growing, showing results going far beyond the original Action Agenda commitments. An April 1999, GAO report on brownfields found that through the partnership, agencies had provided more than \$400 million in assistance to brownfields. The partnership released an accomplishments report in November 1999, showing completion or progress at more than 90 percent of its commitments. The report showed how the partnership is meeting the goals of cleaning up properties, creating new jobs, leveraging additional investments in brownfields, and preserving greenfields.

FEDERAL PARTNERS

- Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)
- Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Department of Commerce (DOC)
 - Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)
- Department of Defense (DOD)
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Department of Education (ED)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
 - Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
 - National Institute of Environmental Health Services (NIEHS)
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of the Interior (DOI)
 - National Park Service
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of Labor (DOL)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of the Treasury (Treasury)
 - Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
- Federal Housing Finance Board (FHFB)
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- Small Business Administration (SBA)

SHOWCASE COMMUNITIES PROJECT

Along with the Brownfields National Partnership Action Agenda, the Brownfields partners called for the selection of Showcase Communities to demonstrate that through cooperation, federal, state, local, and private efforts can be concentrated around brownfields to produce environmental cleanup, stimulate economic development, and revitalize communities. The Brownfields Showcase Communities approach provides sustainable local solutions to local problems that can be replicated throughout the nation. The selected communities serve as models for broad-based cooperative efforts to support locally based initiatives.

Vice President Gore announced 16 Brownfields Showcase Communities in March 1998, and they include:

- Baltimore, MD
- Chicago, IL
- Dallas, TX
- East Palo Alto, CA
- Eastward Ho! (FL)
- Glen Cove, NY
- Kansas City, KS/MO
- Los Angeles, CA
- Lowell, MA
- Portland, OR
- Providence, RI
- St. Paul, MN
- Salt Lake City, UT
- Seattle/King County, WA
- Stamford, CT
- Trenton, NJ

The Showcase Communities receive a variety of benefits. First, they get national visibility for their brownfields efforts. Second, they receive technical and financial support from the Federal partners. Third, each Showcase Community is loaned a Federal employee for up to two years to help coordinate the Communities' brownfields projects. Participating agencies and programs vary for each Showcase depending on a particular Community's needs and projects.

CONTACTS

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<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/partnr.htm>